

August 29, 2006

Welcome back to everyone who has been on vacation or has simply taken a long weekend to relax and enjoy the final days of summer! Before we dive into a very full training schedule and new advisory opinions this fall, we'll ease in with two new plain-language guides to the Ethics Code and an answer to one of our most frequently-asked questions.

### **Two New Guides!**

The OSE staff has rewritten two guides to help your agency employees and any potential or current state contractors better understand the law as it applies to them. Please take time to browse these guides and forward them on to others:

- [\*New Guide to the Code of Ethics for Current or Potential State Contractors\*](#)
- [\*New Guide to the Code of Ethics for Public Officials\*](#)

### **Frequently-asked Question of the Month** Question

I actively participated in a conference by being a featured speaker. I traveled out of state for this event, and received necessary expense payments from a registered lobbyist ("Lobbyist X") which included Amtrak fare, lodging and meals. I reported all of the necessary expense payments to the OSE on the requisite ETH-NE form. The amount for meals totaled \$45.00. Can Lobbyist X still provide me with up to \$50.00 worth of food and beverage for the year under the gift exception, or does this \$45.00 count towards that annual, aggregate limit from the same source?

### Answer

Payment or reimbursement to a state employee by a regulated donor for necessary expenses, including permissible payment for food and beverage (i.e., meals), is separate and apart from the noted gift exception. The gift exception limits a public official or state employee to \$50.00 aggregate in food and beverage per year from a regulated donor, provided the donor or his/her representative is in attendance when the food and beverage is being consumed. In the scenario above, the state employee may still accept up to \$50.00 in food and beverage from Lobbyist X.

To submit a question to be addressed in this electronic forum or on the OSE's Web site, please e-mail the question to [Meredith.Trimble@ct.gov](mailto:Meredith.Trimble@ct.gov).

### **Fall Preview**

This fall, the OSE will debut its new, interactive Web-based training on Part I of the Code of Ethics! And as always, training DVDs, PowerPoint presentations or an OSE staff member in-person are available upon request to assist you in your ethics education efforts.

Sincerely,

Meredith Trimble  
Director of Education  
Office of State Ethics